Ningpo, China
July 15th 1845.

Dearly beloved brethren

I wrote to you from Macao on the 7th of Jany. You will have learned ere this reaches you that I embarked at Hong Kong on the 20th Feby. for Chusan, in company with Mr. & Mrs. Loomis. After a boisterous & somewhat perilous passage of thirty six days we reached Chusan. Bro Loomis remained at that place while I proceeded to Ningpo which I reached on the third of April, & met with a cordial welcome from the brethren who had preceded us. Bro. Lowrie arrived a few days afterward. Our force here therefore is three ordained missionaries & one physician, & two female missionaries - & at Chusan Mr. & Mrs. Loomis. In addition there are now here Dr. Macgowan & Mrs. Macgowan of the Am. Baptist Board, the Rev. Mr. Smith of the English Church Missionary Socy. & Miss Aldersey an elderly English lady who is not under any board but supports herself from the proceeds of a small estate. The Rev. Wm. Milne and Mrs. Milne are expected to reach this field from England during the present year. Dr. Macgowan has established an hospital and prescribes to a considerable number of patients. Miss Aldersey has a school of eighteen girls all of whom reside in her house and are entirely under her control, being supported by herself. Being a single lady & residing in a house without any other foreigner she enjoys peculiar facilities for procuring girls - a thing not easily done in any case, & I believe almost impossible without buying them outright, if there is a gentleman in the house. She owes as much however, probably to her untiring energy, & warm hearted devotedness to her work as to any adventitious circumstances. We are about establishing a boarding school for boys to be under the care of bro. R. Q. Way. Dr. McCartee may possibly be associated with him. Dr. Macgowan has opened a small day school. The rest of us are quietly working our way through the mazes of this singular language. Some of the brethren have made most encouraging progress. Dr. McCartee will probably soon be able to address the people publicly, and thus commence among this people the great work of public instruction in the truths of the gospel. All the missionaries are at present enjoying a tolerable degree of health, though as this is the sickly season here we must not expect to escape disease entirely. Bro. Way has been suffering from fever & ague but seems to have now recovered. Thus much for our present situation. I will not dwell upon it because other subjects claim attention.

I wish, dear brethren, it was in my power to present this field before you just as it is—that you could see it just as I see it. I wish you could, just once, walk with me through these narrow streets, and mingle with these busy crowds, and hear their cheerful, boisterous, mirth. I wish you could go with me to their temples, which you would meet at every turn and witness their absurd idolatry, and see the sacrifices which they offer to devils, and hear their "vain repetitions!" But no. Vain wish. You think your heart would be melted by such a sight. But why should I not as well wish that you might see these things, not simply as I see them, with the eye of sense, but as the angels in heaven see them. Ah! could we but see the things which angels see, with what different feelings would we regard the things of which I speak. And is it in vain, brethren, to wish that we may thus see them? Just in proportion as we feel as they feel in regard to the gospel will we feel as they do in regard to the condition of the heathen. As it is certain that men who believe not Moses & the prophets would not believe though one rose from the dead, it is equally certain that they who feel not for the destitutions & miseries of the heathen when they know them, will not feel for them though they see them. The simple truth is, they are idolaters, and if the statement of such a fact is not sufficient to call forth the sympathies of the heart, I see not how any thing else can do it. Your feelings I know are already deeply interested in the work ~~in~~ which I am engaged, & I have only to endeavour to gratify the feelings which such an interest awakens, and possibly in doing this I may be able to throw some light on the path of duty of some who find it difficult to determine in what part of his vineyard the great Head of the church would have them labour.

The cause of missions in China is still in its infancy, and very much remains to be learned as to the best mode of conducting operations, and very many difficulties must be overcome before the work will be fairly begun. You wish to reach the mind & heart of China and begin of course with the youth. You get before you a class of boys, who are entirely destitute of all ideas in common with your own, and with minds full of the most absurd notions on the most common subjects. You wish to communicate ideas, & to teach them to think. You can find no words by which to communicate with them, & you search in vain for books in their own language which will answer your purpose — and if you had suitable books they would be as incomprehensible to your pupils as Greek or Hebrew. There seems to be no other resort than to teach them English & then teach them orally or by means of our own numerous text books. Accordingly the last has been the plan usually adopted by missionaries. It is not yet quite certain however that this is the best plan. It may be fatal to the boy's best interests to teach him English, and there are instances in which it has proved to be so. Chinese who can speak English are in great demand here, and none can afford to pay them so well as the dealers in opium. There are not many who would refuse to spend their days on an opium ship if tempted by a large salary. A similar difficulty has been experienced in India. If on the other hand boys are taught entirely by means of their own language the labour must be very great for while they are conning over their numerous characters they are throwing away the time in which a great deal of the most useful & necessary knowledge might be most successfully imparted. The years which a Chinese boy spends in laboriously committing to memory the names of the, to him, unmeaning characters, a boy in America spends in laying up knowledge. In the course of years perhaps some of these difficulties may be greatly obviated by the preparation by foreigners of suitable books, & after awhile, it may be, better ones will be prepared by the pupils of our schools. This however our pupils cannot do if they are taught English, for in that case they can never be good Chinese scholars. This is a specimen of our difficulties & I have mentioned it, not because it is the greatest, but rather because it is just now a question of deep practical interest to ourselves. It is one of those questions which experience only can decide, and may perhaps cause as much difficulty as the long mooted question in reference to the proper translation of the name of the true God.

The Lord has opened before us a wide door of usefulness in this city which I trust no man will ever again be able to close against us. The city of Ningpo is situated

in the centre of a vast plain, surrounded on all
by high hills at the distance of from fifteen to twenty miles. This plain is very fertile, being laboriously cultivated & exceedingly well watered by means of numberless canals which answer the people instead of roads. It must sustain an immense population having several other large cities besides, Ningpo & innumerable small villages or hamlets. Ningpo contains probably from 250.000 to 300.000. The city walls are about five & a half to six miles in circumference. The people are kind - much more so than in the south, and I think too more intelligent. They have certainly attained to a very considerable degree of civilization, & indeed require nothing but a better acquaintance with the fine arts & the sciences to carry them as far as any nation can ever go without the gospel. I am surprised, notwithstanding all I had heard, to see their skill in all the common arts of life. Their instruments are often rude but almost always skilfully handled. Vice does not prevail to the extent I

To the
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~~Care of
Rev. A. P. Happer
Macao~~

Rec'd Feb. 8th
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Ans'd Nov. 1846

had supposed. There is much licentiousness, much fraud, much deceit, but, not very much more appears than you are accustomed to see at home. They are more honest here than at the south, so that our servants can be trusted without much risk and we are not in much fear from robbers; indeed as to personal safety we feel as secure as we would at home. We find many men among this people, mild, amiable & gentlemanly, & who are willing to listen to our instructions. We hope that the Lord has much people in this city & that he will make use of the truths communicated by us to bring them to himself. You have probably heard of the organization of a church here of seven members three of these are Chinese who have been brought from the South. We trust you will constantly remember us in your prayers, and that through your prayers our labours will be crowned with abundant success. With many prayers for the blessing of God upon you wherever you may be called to labour & hoping & praying ere long to welcome some of you as fellow-labourers in this field I am, dear brethren,

Yours in the bonds of the gospel
M. S. Culbertson

{Cor. Sec. So. Inquiry}